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After a Second

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Of a life of losses
I had always made
high drama,

ruins to rise from,
hurts for curtain call. But at
our weariest (in drooping dug, in low-ball hell)
we're never numb enough, we don't know
far to fall. Of less and less,

there's more to come. Dead's downer than
sad—and then some.

AFTER A SECOND

The wind was racked, the water rocked,
the one by branches and
the other by degrees.
Clark's ledge disclosed

itself, like clockwork, twice
each day. The only ideas
were the daughters of delay. A headland wood
would split, and double over. Over

depth of dead leaf, shallowness of shade
stood lumber (all uncut, enough
for thieves galore) with no
nails yet, no men to correct for—

either in scale, or
in skew. I meant to bed
my half-light only, hide my hide.
The hood, the wooden

bench— tricked out
with springs, the meadow led exactly
here, had inclinations toward
the cliff. What if? What if? The cliff kept

falling, wrecked by its own
heft; whole shelves shorn off, or hatcheted,
the beach a shardwork of amounting. What
could woodlands do, but burn?—

A twisted thinking snaked into the haven,
time applied a minus to the plus, a troubling
trebling of effect. With fixative
and flux, with rocking and

with rock,
it blazed about
the animalic star.
And made a third of us.